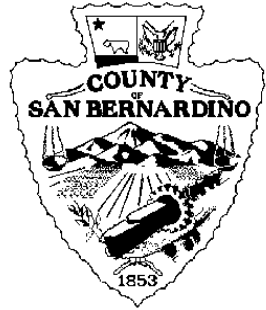


NEWS

From the Office of

Bill Postmus

Chairman of the Board of Supervisors
San Bernardino County



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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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SUPERVISORS APPROVE SEASONAL STAFFING FOR FIRE DEPARTMENT

SAN BERNARDINO – The San Bernardino County Board of Supervisors today unanimously approved supplemental funds in the amount of \$482,000 for the County Fire Department to provide additional firefighter staffing for six months at fire stations serving mountain, desert and foothill communities. The communities include Angeles Oaks, Devore, Fawnskin, Forest Falls, Lytle Creek, Lucerne Valley, Mentone, Phelan, San Antonio Heights and Wrightwood.

Due to above average rainfall this year and warm weather, grasses in the desert and foothill areas are heavier than normal, which could accelerate the spread of fires. In addition to these conditions, the ongoing bark beetle tree mortality emergency in the local mountains continues to pose a significant threat. These factors draw attention to the need to ensure the county's fire stations are adequately staffed for initial callouts of reported fires. "This capability will help ensure that any initial fires can be forcefully addressed by responding fire crews," said Board of Supervisors Chairman Bill Postmus.

The County Board of Supervisors and the San Bernardino County Fire Department remind residents to do their part in understanding fire danger by exercising extreme caution around dry, flammable vegetation. Residents are urged to follow these simple steps to help protect their property:

- ✓ Create a "defensible area" (firebreaks that divert flames around property) by clearing weeds and dry grass at least 30 feet around the home. Property on sloped areas should be cleared at least 100 feet as well, as wind-fed flames can race up hills and mountainsides quickly.
- ✓ Store flammable liquids in approved safety cans away from occupied buildings.
- ✓ Keep propane tanks clear of vegetation.
- ✓ Keep all combustibles, such as firewood, lawn furniture, picnic tables, etc., away from structures.
- ✓ Clean rain gutters regularly to avoid leaf and needle accumulation.
- ✓ Clear vegetation and other flammable materials from beneath decks or other wooden structures.
- ✓ Remove tree limbs and vegetation that overhang the roof.
- ✓ Remove all branches lower than 6 feet.
- ✓ Dispose of stove or fireplace ashes and charcoal briquettes after soaking them in a metal pail of water for 24 hours.
- ✓ Keep garden hose connected to faucet.
- ✓ Review home escape plans with family and have a fire drill exercise.
- ✓ Ensure address is clearly visible from the street.

Residents may contact their local fire department for further information and for free property inspections.